concentric with it; and when completed the old one is removed from within.

As the spring advances the snow walls melt and freeze alternately, forming innumerable icicles, which reflect the light like radiant diamonds. Although this is very beautiful, it is a source of great trouble to the poor inhabitants, whose lungs become affected from repeated colds and coughs. For this reason, although the houses are formed of snow, coolness is the object always kept in view; and from the inexhaustible building materials always at hand, but little time and labour are required to effect any alterations or additions that may be requisite to effect the purpose. Sir John Ross relates a case of a native of Boothia who had closed in his roof within 45 minutes.

Equal in beauty to the snow-houses are those constructed of fresh-water ice. When this is the material employed, it is collected in large transparent slabs, which are arranged in somewhat an octagonal form, and plastered together with snow. The roofs of some are formed of walrus skins, and others have the regular dome-tops of snow. These dwellings are so transparent that even at some paces distance it is possible to distinguish those who stand within them, yet they are so completely air-tight as to be perfectly warm. A passage of the same pure material forms the entry to the hut.

## PROJECTED JUNCTION OF THE RED SEA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN BY A SHIP-CANAL THROUGH THE ISTHMUS OF SUEZ.

This important project is attracting considerable attention in the commercial, political, and scientific circles. Several pamphlets have been recently put forth to shew its practicability; but that which affords the most detailed and comprehensive view of the subject in all its bearings, is one from the pen of Mr. Arthur Anderson, of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Company, of the contents of which may be reduced the following analysis:—Mr. Anderson, it appears, visited Egypt about two years since, when he effected some important arrangements with the Pacha, relative to the transit of the communications with India; and, as would appear from one part of his pamphlet, he must have acquired some share of Mehemet Ali's confidence, having been recently intrusted with a communication on behalf of the Pacha to Sir Robert Peel, the nature of which, however, does not transpire.

During his stay in Egypt, Mr. Anderson devoted much attention to investigate the feasibility of improving the communications with India, *viâ* the Red Sea, by re-opening the ancient canal, said to have once joined the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.

He obtained much valuable information on the subject from M. Linant, of Cairo, a French civil engineer, holding the important office of chief surveyor of roads and bridges to the Pacha, who had shortly previous made an elaborate survey of the isthmus with a view to ascertain the practicability of making a canal through it; and of which, from the extract of his report, given in the pamphlet, there would appear to be little doubt.

Mr. Anderson is not, however, satisfied with this part of the subject merely, but examines the whole question under the following heads:—

1. Its physical practicability.
2. Political arrangements necessary to its accomplishment.
3. Financial considerations.
4. Advantages or disadvantages of navigating by the canal-route, as compared with that *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope.
5. General observations on its political, commercial, and moral utility.

Under the first head it is shewn by M. Linant's report, that in consequence of the Red Sea being 32 feet higher than the level of the Mediterranean, the nature of the soil—a considerable part of the bed of the ancient canal remaining—together with a chain of lakes lying in the proposed track, the excavation of a canal of sufficient depth and width to admit vessels of large burden to pass from one sea to the other may easily be effected; and that, once opened, a salt-water river would be formed, flowing continually from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, at a velocity of from three to four miles an hour. M. Linant calculates the cost, including a pier or breakwater at its embouchure in the Mediterranean, at only 175,000*l.*, which Mr. Anderson considers much below the outlay that would be required. This is a point, however, of no great importance, as it is subsequently shewn that the canal, if opened so as to admit a general intercourse through it, would, at a moderate toll, yield a revenue sufficient to repay the outlay of several millions.

Under the second head, Mr. Anderson considers it doubtful whether Mehemet Ali would be induced to enter upon such undertaking, except through the intervention of some of the leading European powers, and under such guarantees from them as would secure to his descendants a permanent benefit from the tolls of the canal. He then shews the interest which each of the European powers would have in promoting the object.

Under the head of "Financial considerations," he shews, from the value of the trade with the East, and the tonnage of shipping required to carry it on, together with the advantage to be gained by the shorter route, that, estimating only one-fourth of the trade to pass through the canal, and at a very moderate toll, it would yield a revenue of 200,000*l.* per annum—equal to five per cent. on a capital of four millions, whereas M. Linant's estimate of the required outlay is only 175,000*l.*

Mr. Anderson, under the fourth head, enters into a detailed comparison of the advantages or difficulties of navigating by the proposed canal and the Red Sea, as contrasted with the present route *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope, and also points out some obvious and most important advantages which the canal would afford to steam navigation with India, &c.; and he concludes with some general observations as to its utility in a political point of view, as well as in promoting the interests of commerce and civilization throughout the East, which every one must concur in.

The object of his publication Mr. Anderson states to be to draw the attention of the public and the government to the expediency of having the surveys already made verified by British engineers of such eminence as to settle the question of the physical practicability of making the canal, and particularly of constructing a harbour at its entrance in the Mediterranean; and also to ascertain by what means and to what extent the Pacha of Egypt would be induced to undertake or co-operate in it: two points which Mr. Anderson considers must precede any other proceedings, and ought to be taken up by, or under the auspices of, government, under whose notice, it appears, he some time since brought the matter.

The time chosen for calling public attention to it is opportune. The new relations established with China—the increasing development of the resources of our vast Indian empire, and the growing importance of our Australasian colonies, all tend to enhance the importance of so improved a route for oriental commerce; and when the immense influence which it would exercise in civilizing the East is also considered, its accomplishment would, no doubt, be one of the most splendid as well as most useful achievements of modern enterprise. —*Morning Herald.*

## PRESTON INSTITUTION FOR THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE.

PROPOSED NEW BUILDING.

The present establishment, in Cannon-street, comprising the usual objects of a Mechanics' Institution, was founded in the year 1828. It now possesses a valuable library of of more than 3,300 volumes, in different branches of literature and science, besides philosophical instruments, works of art, a numerous collection of natural curiosities, and other articles, forming a museum well worthy of inspection; but the entire property of the institution being crowded together in one room, of very inadequate size, which is also at the same time necessarily used by the members for reading, the utility and interest of the whole are consequently much diminished. The only other room in the present building is fitted up as a lecture-room, being also used by different classes of the members in their meetings for mutual instruction, and it is much too small for either of [illegible] in every department, not only forms a bar to the increase of the library and museum, but many of the working-classes, for whom the institution was principally intended, are thereby prevented from availing themselves of the benefits which it might otherwise afford, and for which there is now an increasing desire.

A proposal was very recently made to the committee by several musical amateurs, members of this institution, and others, for the formation of a choral class, in connection with the institution; they undertaking to provide music and instruments at their own expense, upon condition that any additions made by them to the property of the institution, should only circulate amongst those who are or who should become members of such choral class, as well as members of the institution. The committee having deemed it expedient to accept this offer, the choral class has been formed upon those terms, and upwards of fifty names are already entered as having joined it, being also members of the institution.

It is proposed that the intended new building shall contain suitable apartments for a library, a reading-room, a lecture-hall, the class-rooms, in accordance with the original objects of the institution; and also a music-hall, wherein sacred music and miscellaneous concerts may be performed every week, as for some time past has been the case at similar institutions in Liverpool, Manchester, and other large towns; and which is found to engage the attention of great numbers of both sexes in innocent recreation, who might otherwise have been induced to spend their evenings at public-houses, or in still worse places.

The funds at present applicable to the purchase of land, and the erection of a new building, have arisen from the surplus receipts at an exhibition in the Corn-Exchange four years ago; and a legacy of 100*l.* (minus duty) from the late Mr. Hamer Hargraves, amounting, together with the interest allowed by the bankers, to nearly 400*l.*; exclusive of the profits of the late ball, not yet ascertained; and about 45*l.* collected within the few last weeks amongst the working-classes, of which a separate account is kept under the designation of "The Operative Building Fund," and which is expected to be considerably increased within a short time. These resources are, however, very insufficient for the providing and fitting up of a suitable building to comprise all the above-mentioned desirable objects, upon an adequate scale, with a view to the numerous and increasing population of Preston. Contributions are, therefore, respectfully solicited from the public at large, and especially from the wealthier and middle classes of inhabitants and others, who are interested in the town and neighbourhood of Preston.

The present funds are placed in the bank of Messrs. Lawe, Hudson, and Lawe, in the names of the following trustees, viz.:—R. W. Hopkins, Esq., John Addison, Esq., Thomas Berman, Esq., John Paley, Esq., George Jackson, Esq., Charles Buck, Esq., and B. F. Allen, Esq.; and all future subscriptions will be placed to the same account.

Contributions may be paid or remitted to Robert Lawe, Esq., Treasurer of the Institution, at the above bank; Mr. J. R. Allen, Secretary; or any of the members of the committee.

MOLIÈRE'S MONUMENT — AN AWKWARD BLUNDER.—The *National* notices a fault of orthography on the monument of Molière, which was only perceived after its inauguration. The figure placed to the left of the fountain, and representing a muse, holds in its hands a list of Molière's comedies, on which the *Avare* is written with two *rr*'s. "What," asks the *National*, "can the Committee of Surveillance say for itself? It cannot plead want of time nor want of spectacles. The word is written in black capital letters on a white marble, as clearly and visibly as possible. The committee consisted of 20 members, some filling the highest offices in the Administration, and the others occupying seats in the Academy or belonging to the French Theatre. One would naturally suppose those gentlemen to be competent judges. If they did not sin through ignorance of grammar, how have they accomplished their mission? What did they oversee? A fault of orthography on a literary monument, between the hands of a muse and by the side of Molière! A fault of orthography saluted by all the learned bodies in Paris! Such a mistake is certainly calculated to [illegible] which it gives rise are assuredly well-merited.